# New Brunswick Community College
# Three-Year Graduate Follow-Up Survey
# 2001 Survey of 1997-98 Graduates

Prepared for the
Department of Training and
Employment Development

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# Executive Summary

At the request of the Department of Training and Employment Development, Baseline Market Research Ltd. completed the Three-Year Graduate Follow-Up Survey of the Class of 1997-98 from the New Brunswick Community College. The Class of 1997-98 had also been contacted in 1999, approximately one year following their graduation.

Interviews were conducted with a total of 1,517 graduates of regular programs in the academic year 1997-98. These interviews represented 70% of all graduates of regular programs with necessary contact information (2,155 of the 2,195 total graduates). The survey respondents who participated in this study provided an accurate representation of the overall population of graduates in terms of program of study, college, age, gender and area of residence.

The key findings from this survey are summarized in the points which follow.

- Although a slightly lower percentage of graduates were in the labour force in 2001 as compared to 1999, the 2001 employment rate of 90% is higher than the 88% reported by graduates of regular programs in 1999.

- Graduates working full-time in the reference week of March 18, 2001 averaged 41 hours of work per week and had average full-time earnings of $553.77 per week, 19% higher than graduates were earning in 1999 ($465.70).

- The economic disparity between males and females continues to be in evidence and increasing three years after graduation. In 1999, female graduates working full-time were earning 79% of the average wage of male graduates working full-time. In 2001, female graduates working full-time were earning 75% of the average wage of male graduates working full-time.

- The percentage of graduates employed in permanent positions improved over the three-year period: 84% of those employed were in permanent positions in 2001 compared to 68% employed in such positions in 1999.

- Among graduates, 60% held two employment positions or less since graduation. Graduates within this group were more likely to have found employment in a field related to the training completed than graduates who found three or more employment positions since graduation.

- Since graduation, 19% of the graduates contacted had relocated to another province. Approximately 49% of those had returned to New Brunswick by the reference week of March 18, 2001. At the time of contact in 2001, 90% of graduates were residing in New Brunswick.

- Approximately 33% of graduates contacted had returned to school or training at some point since July 1998. Among those who had returned to school, 66% returned for additional education or training in the same field of study as that completed through the NBCC.

- Overall, 82% of graduates indicated that the NBCC had done an excellent (38%) or good (44%) job of preparing them for employment in a related field.

- Approximately 34% of graduates contacted indicated that they had developed other skills or abilities during their training at the NBCC which helped them to find a job. The skills or abilities mentioned most frequently included positive attitudes/behaviours, the ability to use/apply knowledge and experience, teamwork/communications skills, computer expertise, and a combination of job development skills.

This is the fifth Three-Year Graduate Follow-Up survey completed for the New Brunswick Community College, and the information collected is remarkably similar to that collected in the most recent report published in 1999, suggesting that graduates follow similar patterns in the three-year period following graduation.

Analysis of the information presented (see chart below) related to the number of jobs held provides the basis for the following observations:

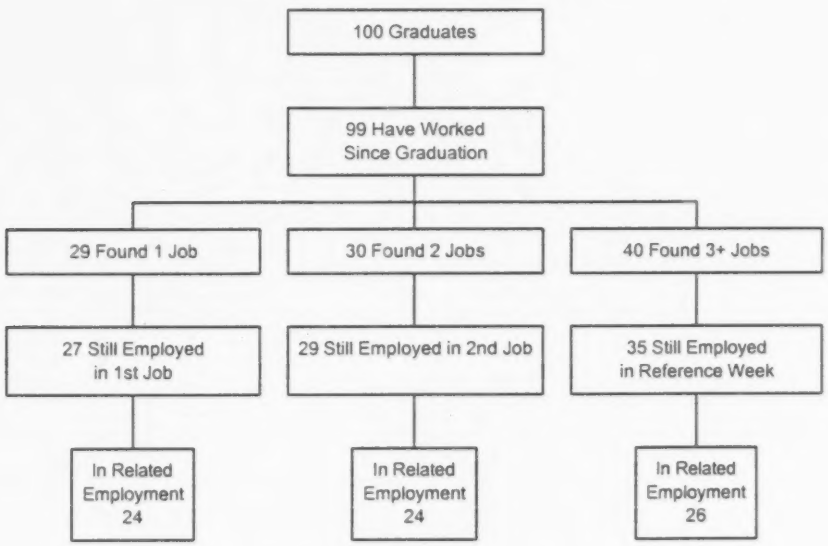
- there were no differences in the probability of reference week employment in relation to the

number of jobs held, if two or less since graduation: graduates with one or two jobs were equally likely (92%) to be employed in the reference week;

- those who held three or more jobs were slightly less likely than those with one or two jobs to be employed (88%) in the reference week; and

- those who held one job were significantly more likely (90%) to have been in a position related to their training than those who held two (81%) or three or more positions (74%).

## Three Years Following Graduation


100 Graduates
99 Have Worked Since Graduation
29 Found 1 Job
30 Found 2 Jobs
40 Found 3+ Jobs
27 Still Employed in 1st Job
29 Still Employed in 2nd Job
35 Still Employed in Reference Week
In Related Employment 24
In Related Employment 24
In Related Employment 26

(Baseline).

The sections which follow present background information for the survey, the methodology employed, a comparison of survey and graduate populations and the findings from this three-year follow-up study.

## 2.0 Survey Background

The employment activities and labour force involvement of graduates of the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) have been tracked annually since 1983. In 1996, the Department, then known as the Department of Advanced Education and Labour, completed the first three-year follow-up survey with graduates from the Class of 1992-93. Since 1996, three-year follow-up surveys have been conducted annually.

As with previous three-year follow-up surveys, the 2001 survey was designed to provide an overview of the graduates' experiences over the three-year period following completion of their programs of study.

The objectives specified for this project focussed on the development of information about the graduates' employment and additional education or training since graduation. Specifically, the 2001 survey was designed to:

- determine the current (2001) employment status of graduates of regular programs of the 1997-98 academic year;
- generate information on the labour force activities of graduates since completion of their program of study at the NBCC;
- determine the relationship between the training program completed and employment positions held since completion in 1997 - 1998;
- generate information about additional education and training experiences of graduates since completion of the program at the NBCC;
- generate information about the migration patterns of graduates; and
- obtain the graduates' assessments of their community college experience.

The section which follows presents the methodology employed to achieve the stated objectives.

## 3.0 Survey Methodology

The Department provided Baseline with a data base of the original listing for 2,155 graduates of regular programs at the NBCC in 1997-98. This data file also contained updated contact information obtained from the 1999 survey with these graduates. In reporting data from this survey, 2,155 graduates of regular programs constitute the base for calculation of graduate population statistics.

The research instrument was designed by The Department staff in consultation with the NBCC prior to the contract award. Baseline adapted the instrument for use with the firm's computer-assisted data collection system (CATI).

Telephone interviews were conducted for this research and contacts were attempted with all graduates of regular programs, regardless of their current area of residence. Graduates were assured of absolute confidentiality of responses in keeping with professional research standards. Interviewers understood the project objectives and were trained in the use of the final research instrument prior to the start of data collection. The Department provided a list of methodological instructions to be followed in the event of certain types of situations or answers.

All contacts were completed in the official language of choice of the graduate. Contact efforts were conducted over a period of 23 days between March 27 and April 18, 2001. All working numbers not reached on the first attempt were called at least five additional times in order to attempt to complete the interviews.

Calculation of the survey response rate is based on the total completed interviews as a percentage of total graduates. The response rate for this study was 70% (1,517 completed interviews with a total graduate population of 2,155). The primary reason for non-contact was the lack of a current telephone number rather than a graduate's refusal to participate in the study. Interestingly, 48% of the respondents who had refused to participate in the one-year follow-up survey completed interviews for this three-year follow-up survey.

Following completion of data collection and coding of all open response items, the Department was provided with initial frequencies for survey items and a data set in an SPSS system file.

The section which follows compares the survey population with the graduate population from which they were drawn.

# 4.0 Graduate and Survey Populations

Since the information generated from the 2001 survey is to be used to describe the overall population of graduates from regular programs, it is essential to demonstrate that the survey population (respondents) is representative of the overall 1997-98 graduate population.

The chosen method of testing the representativeness of the survey population was to assess survey response rates for each program. As noted, the overall response rate was 70%. Table A-1 in Appendix A presents information on survey response rates for each program offered through the NBCC.

Of the 125 individual programs available to the Class of 1997-98, Baseline completed interviews with graduates from 122 programs. The only programs from which graduates were not contacted were Fabric Surface Design III, Electronics Engineering Technology II - Industrial Controls and Communications Arts - Journalism II.

While most programs had an acceptable response rate, at or above 50%, graduates from several programs were more difficult to locate. Table 1 summarizes the response rates for these programs.

**Table 1**
**Programs with Low Response Rates**
**(1999 and 2001 Comparison)**

| Programs | # of Regular Graduates | Response Rate 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Communication Arts - Journalism II | 4 | 50% | -- |
| Fabric Surface Design III | 1 | -- | -- |
| Electronics Engineering Technology II - Industrial Controls | 2 | 100% | -- |
| Culinary Techniques | 5 | 20% | 20% |
| Knowledge Engineering Technology II | 8 | 75% | 25% |
| Creative Graphics III | 7 | 43% | 29% |
| Electronic Game Design II | 13 | 62% | 31% |
| Computer Integrated Manufacturing | 3 | 67% | 33% |
| Jewellery Making II | 5 | 60% | 40% |
| Clay III | 5 | 40% | 40% |
| Photography III | 10 | 70% | 40% |
| Accommodations, Food & Beverage Service II | 19 | 68% | 42% |
| Communication Arts Video and TV Production II | 7 | 71% | 43% |
| Agriculture II | 14 | 50% | 43% |
| Business Technology II - Administration | 9 | 78% | 44% |
| Call Centre Operations | 9 | 56% | 44% |
| Computer Systems Support | 26 | 77% | 46% |

Baseline attempted to contact 100% of graduates in programs with enrollment of 10 or less. In the overall population, there were 283 graduates from such programs and Baseline contacted 181 or 64% of these graduates.

Table 2 presents information which allows a review of the representativeness of the survey

population. The survey and graduate populations for regular programs are comparable in terms of gender and age distribution. The survey population is also representative of the graduate population in relation to the college at which the programs were completed.

**Table 2**
**Population - Sample Comparison (Regular Program Graduates)**

| Characteristics | Graduate Population | Survey Population (Respondents) |
|---|---|---|
| Total Number | 2,155 | 1,470 |
| Gender | | |
| Males | 52% | 52% |
| Females | 48% | 48% |
| | 100% | 100% |
| Age as of Survey Contact | | |
| 24 or Younger | 53% | 51% |
| 25-29 | 25% | 28% |
| 30-39 | 13% | 13% |
| 40-49 | 8% | 6% |
| 50+ | 1% | 2% |
| | 100% | 100% |
| College | | |
| Bathurst | 11% | 11% |
| Campbellton | 8% | 8% |
| Dieppe | 10% | 9% |
| Edmundston | 4% | 4% |
| Miramichi | 9% | 9% |
| Moncton | 20% | 20% |
| NBCCD | 2% | 2% |
| Saint John | 20% | 21% |
| St. Andrews | 9% | 9% |
| Woodstock | 7% | 7% |
| | 100% | 100% |

The average age of graduates in 2001 is 27 as is that of the sample contacted. Table A-1 contains a breakdown of the average age of respondents within each program contacted. This table also presents information on the gender distribution within programs.

At the time of contact for this three-year follow-up survey, respondents were residing in the following areas:

- 90% in New Brunswick;
- 2% in Alberta;
- 2% in Ontario;
- 2% in Nova Scotia;
- 1% in Quebec;
- 2% in other Canadian provinces; and
- 1% in the United States or in another country.

The information in Table 2 and that in Table A-1 indicate that the survey population provides a solid base from which to generalize about the total population of graduates, with the exception of the three programs whose graduates were not contacted.

# 5.0 Research Findings

This narrative summarizes the key survey findings related to the research objectives. Detailed tables in Appendix A provide information at the program level.

The presentation of information begins with the labour market involvement of graduates contacted. Wherever possible, information collected in the 2001 survey is compared to the information collected from this same group of graduates in the one-year follow-up survey in 1999.

## 5.1 Force Participation and Employment Rates

According to accepted Statistics Canada definitions, respondents can be grouped into three mutually exclusive categories:

- **employed**: represents graduates who are employed at a job or business either full-time (30 hours per week or more) or part-time (less than 30 hours per week);

- **unemployed**: represents graduates not working but looking for work as well as those who have accepted a full-time job to start in the near future; and

- **not in the labour force** (NILF): represents graduates who are not working and not looking for work or graduates who are unavailable for work.

Using these definitions, the **labour force** consists of employed and unemployed graduates and the **labour force participation rate** is the number of graduates in the labour force as a percentage of all graduates.

## 5.2 Labour Force Participation Rates

During the reference week of March 18, 2001:

- 93% of survey respondents were in the labour force; and
- 7% were not in the labour force at the time of contact (not actively seeking employment or not available for work).

The labour force participation rates for male and female graduates were the same at 93%.

When contacted in 1999, 95% of graduates of regular programs were in the labour force and the female participation rate of 96% was slightly higher than that for males (95%).

Table A-2 in Appendix A presents information on labour force participation rates for each program. A review of the information in this table provides the basis for the following observations:

- graduates from five programs had participation rates less than 70%: Fashion III (50%); Landscaping (50%); Food Technology II (67%); Electronics Engineering Technology III - Industrial Controls (Co-op) (67%); and Civil Engineering Technology II - Surveying (67%); and
- graduates in 64 of the 122 programs contacted (52% of programs) had a 100% labour force participation rate.

## 5.3 Employment Rate

According to Statistics Canada, the **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed graduates as a percentage of the number of graduates in the labour force. For the purpose of this report, the **employment rate** is the number of employed graduates as a percentage of graduates in the labour force.

During the survey reference week of March 18, 2001:

- the employment rate for graduates was 90%; and
- the unemployment rate was 10%.

In 1999, the employment rate for graduates of regular programs was 88% and the unemployment rate was 12%.

There was a statistically significant difference observed in the employment rates for male and female graduates:

- the overall employment rate for females was 95% compared to a rate of 86% for males; however,
- 95% of the males employed were working full-time in the reference week compared to 83% of the females working full-time.

Similar patterns were reported in 1999.

A review of the information presented in Table A-2 provides the basis for the following

observations:

- graduates in 56 of the 122 programs (46%) contacted had an employment rate of 100%; and

- graduates in 6 of the 122 programs (5%) had employment rates at or below 50%: Landscaping (no employment); Agricultural Techniques (33%); Agricultural Technology II (50%); Call Centre Operations (50%); Vocational Forest Worker (50%); Printing Techniques III Co-op (50%) and Small Equipment Repair (50%).

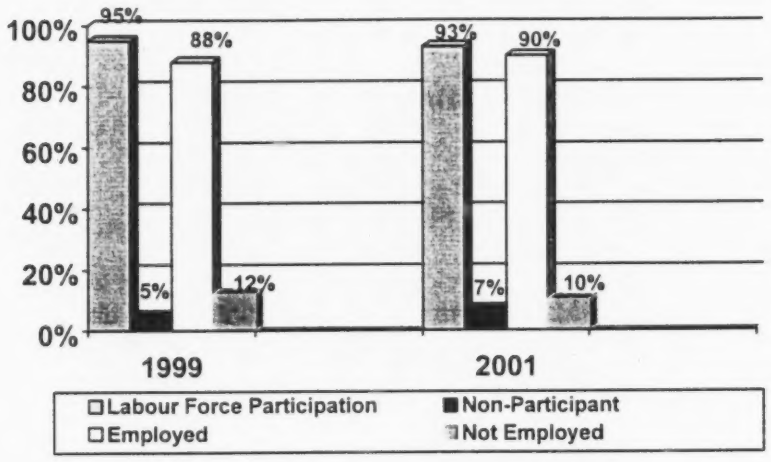
## 5.4 Comparative Labour Force Participation and Employment Rates

Chart 1 presents a summary of the information collected about labour force participation and employment rates for the Class of 1997-98 at the one-and three-year intervals following completion of their community college programs.

Based on the information in Chart 1, one can observe that while the labour force participation rate has decreased from 95% to 93% over the two-year period since 1999, the employment rate has increased by two percentage points. It is of interest to note that a similar pattern has been observed in previous three-year graduate follow-up surveys.

## Chart 1

***Labour Force Participation and Employment Rate***




### 5.5 Employment in New Brunswick

The residence patterns of employed graduates were similar to the overall sample. Among employed graduates contacted:

- 90% resided in New Brunswick;
- 3% were in Alberta;
- 2% were in Ontario;
- 2% were in Nova Scotia;
- 1% were in Quebec;
- 1% were in other Canadian provinces; and
- 1% were outside Canada.

In 1999, 93% of employed graduates were working in New Brunswick compared to the 90% in 2001, a decrease of three points in the percentage of employed graduates who reside in New Brunswick.

Table A-6 in Appendix A presents the relocation patterns of survey respondents.

## 5.6 Employment Related to Training

Among survey respondents:

- 63% of those employed were in positions which they described as directly related to the training they received through the NBCC;
- 18% of those employed were in positions which they described as indirectly related to the training received; and
- 19% of those employed were in positions which they described as not at all related to the training received through the NBCC.

Table A-3 in Appendix A provides a summary of related employment by program.

When contacted one year following graduation, the Class of 1997-98 reported a similar pattern with 63% in positions described as directly related and 18% in positions described as indirectly related to the training received at the NBCC.

## 5.7 Hours of Work

Full-time graduate employment is a key indicator of a successful transition to the labour force. Within the survey population contacted, 89% of employed graduates were working in full-time positions, averaging 41 hours in the reference week.

Table 3 presents a summary of work patterns for male and female members of the class of 1997-98 and indicates that there has been a decrease of two points in the percentage of graduates who worked full-time hours over the 1999 - 2001 period. The percentage of females employed full-time has decreased by three percentage points while the percentage of males employed full-time decreased by two points.

**Table 3**
**Employment Patterns Reported in 1999 and 2001**

| | 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|
| Employed Full-time | 91% | 89% |
| Males | 96% | 95% |
| Females | 86% | 83% |
| | | |
| Employed Part-time | 9% | 11% |
| Males | 4% | 5% |
| Females | 14% | 17% |

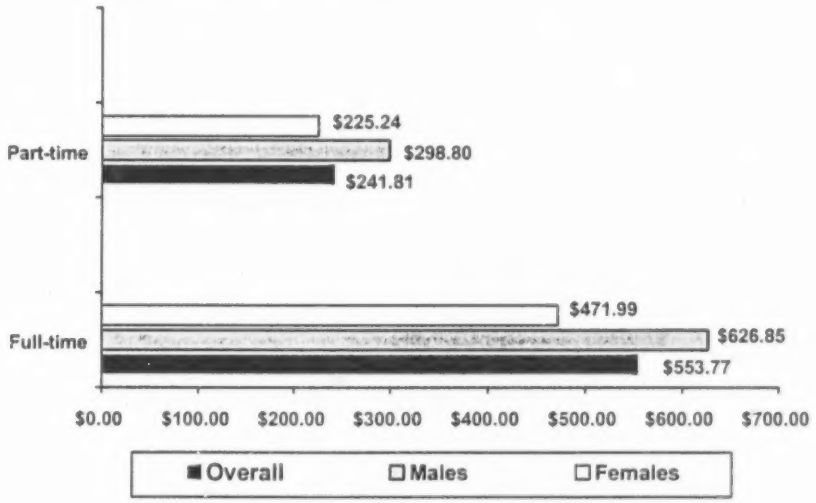
## 5.8 Average Weekly Earnings

The average earnings for graduates with full-time and part-time hours in the reference week are summarized in Chart 2.

### Chart 2

***Wage Levels by Gender and Hours Worked***

***1997-98 Graduates in 2001***




Details on the full-time earnings by program are presented in Table A-3 in Appendix A. A review of the information in Table A-3 indicated that there were wide variations in earnings in relation to the program completed.

- The full-time wages in the reference week ranged from a low of $75 to a high of $4,000. The standard deviation for the wage distribution was $286.56 and the mean was $553.77.

- When contacted in 1999, graduates of regular programs in full-time positions reported wages within a range of $100 to $2,200 with an average of $466.61 and a standard deviation of $232.15.

- Average weekly wages in the 2001 reference week, for graduates in positions which were directly related to the program of study completed at the NBCC, ranged from $100 to $4,000, averaging $574.34. This compares to an average of $484.62 for graduates in directly related positions in June 1999 within a range of $ 150.00 - $2,200.00

- Wages also varied in relation to gender. For example, the average weekly wage for a male graduate working full-time in the reference week was $626.85 compared to an average of $471.99 for female graduates in full-time positions.

Table 4 compares the wage information for graduates based on gender. Information is presented for 1999 and 2001. Additional analysis of the average wages reported in 1999 and 2001 and the information in Table 4 provides the basis for the observations which follow.

- Overall, average weekly earnings increased by 18.7% over the 1999 - 2001 period for graduates employed full-time.

- Graduates employed in positions which were directly related to the program completed at the NBCC experienced an 18.5% increase in the average weekly income over the 1999-2001 period. The percentage increase ranged from 3.5% to 136.7%.

**Table 4**
**Reported Earnings of Regular Program Graduates**
**Full-time Employment (1999 - 2001)**

| | 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|
| Employed full-time* | 91% | 89% |
| Average Hours Worked - All | 41.9 | 41.1 |
| Males | 44.3 | 42.9 |
| Females | 39.4 | 39.0 |
| | | |
| Average Weekly Earnings (F-T) | $466.61 | $553.77 |
| Males | $520.65 | $626.85 |
| Females | $407.07 | $471.99 |
| | | |
| Employed part-time | 9% | 11% |
| Average Hours Worked - All | 19.9 | 19.4 |
| Males | 17.6 | 19.9 |
| Females | 20.6 | 19.3 |
| | | |
| Average Weekly Earnings (P-T) | $210.01 | $241.81 |
| Males | $214.73 | $298.80 |
| Females | $208.67 | $225.24 |

* Full-time is defined as 30 hours or more per week.

Table 5 compares wages in the reference week for positions directly related to training for graduates in 1999 and in 2001. In this table the sample within each program included at least 10 graduates in both survey periods.

**Table 5**
**Comparative Wages in Reference Week within NBCC Programs**
**(Full-time, Directly-related Positions)**

| Program Title | Sample 2001 | Average Reference Week Wage | | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1999 | 2001 | |
| Overall | 710 | $484.62 | $574.34 | 19% |
| Nursing Assistant | 58 | $507.31 | $509.12 | 0% |
| Office Technology (60 wk) | 50 | $364.37 | $430.78 | 18% |
| Business Technology II - Accounting | 28 | $458.04 | $562.22 | 23% |
| Automotive Service Technician | 27 | $339.82 | $422.13 | 24% |
| Cook | 19 | $325.15 | $339.44 | 4% |
| Machinist | 19 | $487.36 | $594.27 | 22% |
| Business Technology II - Marketing | 16 | $514.55 | $644.10 | 25% |
| Electronics Engineering Technology II - Data Systems | 16 | $702.00 | $754.54 | 7% |
| Welding | 14 | $517.42 | $693.55 | 34% |
| Pharmacy Assistant | 14 | $337.91 | $403.00 | 19% |
| Child Care | 13 | $211.27 | $250.46 | 19% |
| Tele-Service | 12 | $405.54 | $431.14 | 6% |
| Office Techniques II | 12 | $317.98 | $334.91 | 5% |
| Motor Vehicle Body Repairer & Painter | 10 | $373.10 | $524.44 | 41% |
| Truck & Transportation Service Technician | 10 | $405.62 | $462.14 | 14% |
| Computer Programming Technology II - Technician & Network | 10 | $582.00 | $576.00 | -1% |

Table 6 presents an overview of wages in the same employment positions which were directly related to the training completed at the NBCC. At least 10 graduates in each position reported wages.

**Table 6**
**Comparative Wage Information for Specific Occupations**

| National Occupational Classification | | # Employed 2001 | Average Reference Week Wage 1999 | Average Reference Week Wage 2001 | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Overall | 576 | $484.62 | $574.34 | 18.5% |
| 3233 | Registered Nursing Assistant | 56 | $508.00 | $500.75 | -1.4% |
| 7321 | Motor Vehicle Mechanics | 36 | $355.66 | $426.00 | 19.8% |
| 2241 | Electrical Eng. Technologist/Technicians | 35 | $582.27 | $673.62 | 15.7% |
| 2163 | Computer Programmers | 25 | $611.82 | $758.48 | 24.0% |
| 1431 | Accounting Clerks | 19 | $417.33 | $530.54 | 27.1% |
| 6242 | Cooks | 18 | $313.77 | $330.69 | 5.4% |
| 1453 | Customer Service-Clerks | 17 | $431.56 | $514.80 | 19.3% |
| 2242 | Electronic Service Technicians | 17 | $611.36 | $620.91 | 1.6% |
| 1411 | General Office Clerks | 16 | $338.18 | $398.86 | 17.9% |
| 3414 | Other Heath Aides/Pharmacy Assistants | 16 | $337.91 | $419.46 | 24.1% |

Table 7 compares wages for both surveys for full-time positions which were directly, indirectly and not related to the training completed at the NBCC.

**Table 7**
**Comparative Average Wage Information**

| | Average Wage in Reference Week | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1999 | 2001 | % Changes |
| Overall | $465.70 | $553.78 | 19% |
| Directly related | $484.62 | $574.34 | 19% |
| Indirectly related | $402.50 | $554.35 | 38% |
| Not at all related | $345.00 | $481.83 | 40% |

## Baseline

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While graduates are doing better, overall, data indicate that those in positions which are not directly related to their training experienced higher wage gains over the period although graduates in employment directly related to the training completed started and ended with higher wages, on average.

In 1999, males working in full-time positions reported an average wage of $518.73 compared to females in full-time positions who reported an average wage of $407.70. In 2001, the earnings of male graduates had increased by 21% to $626.85. The earnings of female graduates in full-time positions increased by 16% to $471.99.

In 1999, female graduates working full-time were earning approximately 79% of earnings of males working full-time. In 2001, females working full-time were earning approximately 75% of earnings of males working full-time. The wage gap between the earnings of male and female graduates in full-time positions has increased by approximately four percentage points between 1999 and 2001.

In a review of the full-time wages for male and female graduates, it is apparent that the genders tend to be employed in different types of jobs, as would be expected given their enrolment in different programs. The number of occupations in which both men and women were employed in the reference week was too small to provide adequate comparisons within occupations.

## 5.9 Employment Status

Each respondent provided information about his or her employment status in the reference week in relation to the main job held. The information collected in 2001, along with that collected in 1999, is presented in Table 8. More graduates were employed in permanent positions in the reference week in 2001 than had been in such positions in 1999.

**Table 8**
**Comparison of Employment Status for Main Position in Reference Week**

| | 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|
| Permanent Positions | 68% | 82% |
| Temporary Positions | 30% | 15% |
| Self-employed | 2% | 3% |

## 5.10 Time in Current Employment

Graduates employed in the reference week had worked in that position for an average of 20.1 months (assuming a starting date of July 1, 1998 and a maximum of 33 months).

Among all those employed in the reference week (n=1,271):

- 18% had been employed for 6 months or less;
- 14% had been employed between 7 and 12 months;
- 24% had been employed between 13 and 24 months;
- 20% had been employed between 25 and 32 months; and
- 24% had been employed for the full 33-month period.

There was no clear pattern in the relationship between the amount of time employed in the reference week position and the program completed at the NBCC, the work situation in the reference week nor the type of employment.

### 5.11 Work Situation in Reference Week

Each survey respondent described their work situation in the reference week. Information about the various work situations for graduates of each program is presented in Table A-4 in Appendix A. As evidenced in Chart 3, the majority of graduates (90%) were working for one employer.

## Chart 3

***Work Situation In Reference Week***

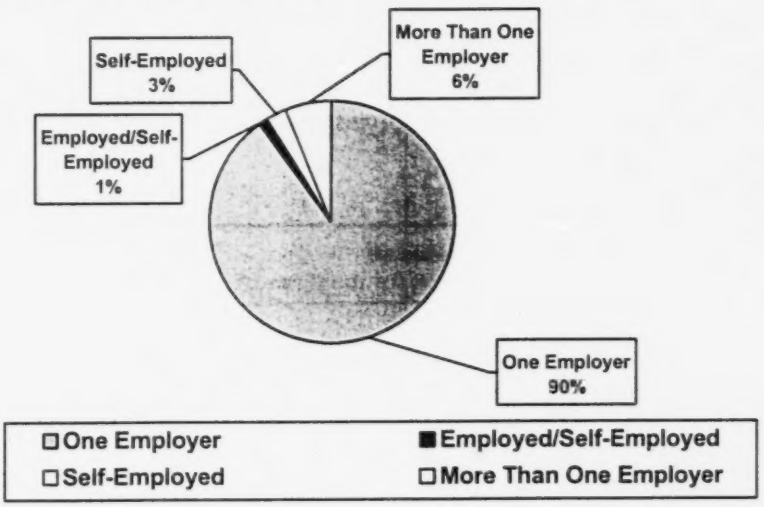



Table 9 compares the work situation of graduates in 1999 and 2001 and indicates that there has been little change over the three years since graduation.

**Table 9**
**Work Situation in Reference Week**
**Graduates of Regular Programs**

| | 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|
| One Employer | 88% | 90% |
| More Than One Employer | 9% | 6% |
| Employed/self-employed | 2% | 1% |
| Self-employed Only | 1% | 3% |

## 5.12 Summary of Graduate Employment

Table 10 summarizes the reference week employment information about the Class of 1997-98 when they were contacted at the one-year and three-year intervals.

**Table 10**
**Comparative Information for the Class of 1997-98**

| | 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|
| Labour Force Participation Rate | 95% | 93% |
| Employment Rate | 88% | 90% |
| Percent of Those Employed Working full-time | 91% | 89% |
| Average Weekly FT Wage | $465.70 | $553.77 |

The information in Table 10 indicates that slightly fewer graduates are in the labour force three years after graduation and those employed are slightly less likely to be working full-time but likely to be earning 18% more in wages, overall.

## 5.13 Graduates Not Working in Reference Week

This section provides a summary of the 16% of graduates (n=246) who were not working in the reference week. Those not working include both those who were unemployed (that is seeking employment) and those who were not in the labour force (NILF).

Within this group:

- 56% were actively seeking employment or waiting for a job to start (within four weeks of the reference week); and

- 44% were not in the labour force.

The primary reasons for not working in the reference week were as follows:

- 29% were attending additional education or training on a full-time basis;
- 23% stated that they were unable to find work;
- 17% were awaiting recall for a previous employment position or on lay-off;
- 7% were unable to find work related to their NBCC training;
- 7% were unable to work because of personal or family responsibilities;
- 4% were not working because of illness/disability; and
- 13% cited a variety of other reasons.

Among those not employed:

- men were more likely to be looking for work (59%) than were women (36%); and

- women were more likely to be out of the labour force (63%) than were men (42%).

## 5.14 Overall Employment Since Graduation

Overall, approximately 99% of the class of 1997-98 held at least one job since completing their program of study at the NBCC. Table A-5 in Appendix A provides the employment history by program of respondents since graduation.

Most graduates completed their training in June 1998; however, some completed their training earlier in that academic year. Therefore, it was necessary to establish a common reporting period in order to generate consistent information related to employment. For the purposes of this survey, a 33-month period for measurement of employment patterns (July 1998 - March 2001) was established for this study.

Over the 33-month period, survey respondents held an average of 2.5 different jobs and worked an average of 28 months. Within this 33-month period, respondents averaged 22 months in positions related to their program of study.

Within the group of respondents contacted:

- 82% started their first job following completion of their NBCC program in 1998;
- 6% returned to, or continued with, employment held prior to completion of the NBCC program;
- 10% started their first job in 1999; and
- 2% found their first employment in 2000 or later.

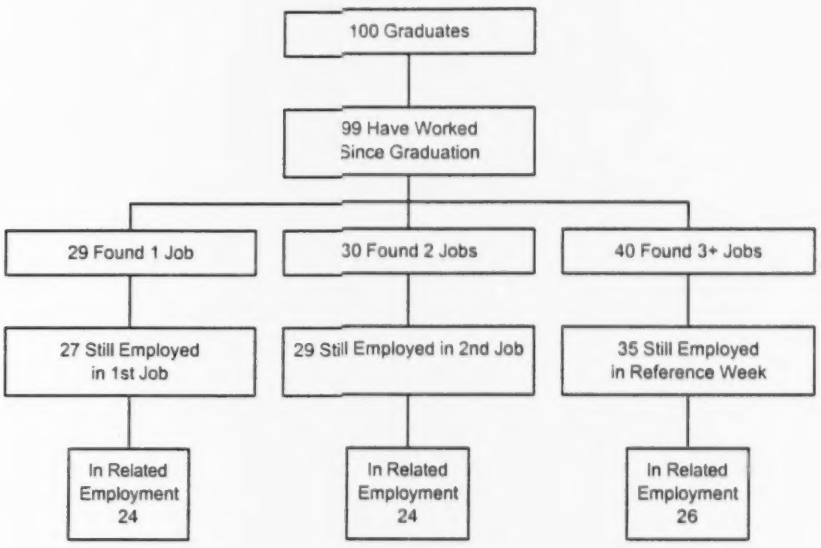
Among those contacted:

- 29% have held one employment position since completion of a program at the NBCC;
- 30% have held two positions;
- 22% have held three positions;
- 18% have held more than three positions since completion of their program; and
- less than 1% have not worked since completion of their program.

Chart 4 presents an overview of the employment patterns for graduates within the context of an index in which the total population of graduates is represented by an index score of 100. Using survey data, Chart 4 demonstrates that 99 graduates out of 100 have had employment since graduation; that 32 graduates have found one job since graduation, that 28 of those who have found one job were still employed in that position and that 24 of those still employed in that first job were working in related employment in the reference week.

## CHART 4

### Three Years Following Graduation


100 Graduates
99 Have Worked Since Graduation
29 Found 1 Job
30 Found 2 Jobs
40 Found 3+ Jobs
27 Still Employed in 1st Job
29 Still Employed in 2nd Job
35 Still Employed in Reference Week
In Related Employment 24
In Related Employment 24
In Related Employment 26

Analysis of the information related to the number of jobs held provides the basis for the following observations:

- there were no differences in the probability of reference week employment in relation to the number of jobs held since graduation, if two or less: graduates with one or two jobs were equally likely (92%) to be employed in the reference week;

- those who held three or more jobs were slightly less likely than those with one or two jobs to be employed (88%) in the reference week; and

- those who held one job were significantly more likely (90%) to have been in a position related to their training than those who held two (81%) or three or more positions (74%).

## 5.15 Migration of Graduates

Approximately 19% of respondents have resided outside the province at some point since completion of the 1997-98 academic year. Sixty-six percent of those who relocated did so in order to find employment while 34% relocated for other reasons. Table A-6 in Appendix A presents information about graduate relocation by program.

A graduate who left New Brunswick to find employment required an average of 2.7 weeks to find a job. Among those who relocated for employment, 47% apparently arranged employment prior to relocation since no time was reported for an out-of-province job search.

Approximately 49% of those who relocated had returned to New Brunswick as of April 2001. Among those who left specifically to find employment, 47% had returned to the province by April 2001 as did 50% of those who apparently had a job outside the province at the time they relocated.

## 5.16 Additional Education and Training

Within the respondent group contacted, 503 or 33% of the graduates had returned to school/training at some point over the 33-month period following graduation.

Among those who had returned to school (n=503):

- 332 (66%) returned to an education/training program in the same field of study as that completed through the NBCC; while

- 171 (34%) returned to a different area of study.

Among those who had returned to school at the time of contact:

- 72% had completed the additional education prior to contact; while

- 28% were enrolled in a program at the time of contact.

Among those who were involved with additional training/education at the time of contact for the survey (n=140):

- 67% were attending as full-time students; and

- 33% were attending as part-time students.

Among those who had returned to school and were employed when contacted (n=399), approximately 37% (n=148) returned to school in order to qualify for their current position. Within the total group of respondents, 11% (n=163) reported that they were in an apprenticeship program in the reference week.

Detailed information about education, training and apprenticeships following completion of a program at the NBCC is presented in Table A-7 in Appendix A.

## 5.17 Evaluation of NBCC Programs

Each respondent was asked the following question:

> *In general would you say that your program did an excellent, good, fair or a poor job of preparing you for employment in a related field?*

Table A-8 in Appendix A presents a summary of the responses provided by respondents within each program. Chart 5 presents an overall summary of the evaluations provided. Table 11 compares the evaluations of job preparedness provided by graduates when they were initially surveyed in 1999, with the information provided in this survey.

## Chart 5

***Program Rating for Job Preparedness***

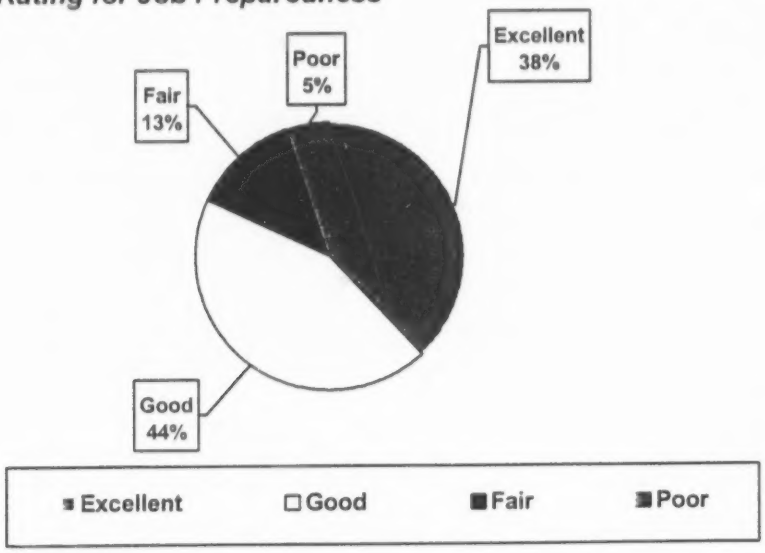


**Table 11**
**Evaluation: Preparedness for Employment in a Related Field**

| | 1999 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | 39% | 38% |
| Good | 46% | 44% |
| Fair | 11% | 13% |
| Poor | 4% | 5% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

Table 11 does not suggest any significant shift in the overall evaluation of programs in terms of preparation for employment in a related job.

Table 12 presents an overview of the evaluations provided by respondents in relation to employment in the reference week in 1999 and 2001. The information in Table 12 demonstrates that a similar pattern existed for both survey periods with those unemployed more likely, as would be expected, to provide a lower evaluation for job preparedness. The differences in overall evaluations increased over the period between follow-up surveys.

Table 12
Program Evaluation by Labour Force Status

| | Overall | Employed | Unemployed | Not in Labour Force |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1999** | | | | |
| Excellent | 39% | 41% | 26% | 32% |
| Good | 46% | 45% | 52% | 40% |
| Fair | 11% | 10% | 16% | 20% |
| Poor | 4% | 4% | 6% | 8% |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| **2001** | | | | |
| Excellent | 38% | 40% | 28% | 24% |
| Good | 44% | 43% | 46% | 50% |
| Fair | 13% | 12% | 20% | 18% |
| Poor | 5% | 5% | 6% | 8% |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

## 5.18 Additional Skills Developed at NBCC

In addition to an evaluation of the way in which the NBCC programs prepared graduates for employment in a related job, respondents were asked the question which follows.

*In addition to occupational skills, were there any other skills or abilities that you developed during your training at NBCC which helped you to find a job?*

Overall, 514 respondents (34%) identified an additional skill or ability. Table 13 presents the skills identified by the overall sample.

**Table 13**
**Additional Skills Acquired Through NBCC**

| Skills Identified | Overall |
|---|---|
| Resume development/job search skills/interviewing techniques | 22% |
| Communication skills | 17% |
| Management skills/Combination of skills or other skills | 12% |
| Positive attitudes/behaviours | 11% |
| Computer-related skills | 8% |
| "Real World" preparation/experience | 8% |
| Ability to use specific knowledge and experience | 8% |
| Teamwork skills | 7% |
| Combination of skills/other skills | 7% |
| | 100% |

## 6.0 Conclusion

This narrative, combined with the tables presented in Appendix A, provides a summary of the information collected from the three-year follow-up survey of graduates of the New Brunswick Community College regular training programs in the 1997-98 academic year. This is the sixth study of its type completed in New Brunswick, and the information collected is remarkably similar to that reported in 1999, suggesting that NBCC graduates follow similar patterns in the three-year post -NBCC period.

The key findings from this survey are summarized in the points which follow.

- The participation rate for 1998 graduates decreased slightly from 95% in 1999 to 93% in 2001; however, the employment rate for graduates increased by two percentage points (from 88% in 1999 to 90% in 2001);

- Graduates working full-time were averaging 41 hours of work per week and had average full-time earnings of $553.77 per week, 19% higher than these same graduates were earning in 1999.

- The economic disparity between males and females continued to be in evidence three years after graduation with female graduates working full-time hours earning approximately 75% of the average amount earned by male graduates working full-time hours. The 75% represents a decrease of four percentage points over the relative position of female to male graduates' wages when the Class of 1997-98 was initially contacted in 1999.

- Graduates gained in the percentage employed in permanent positions over the three-year period: 84% of those employed were in permanent positions in 2001 compared with 68% employed in such positions in 1999;

- Among graduates, 60% have held two employment positions or less since

graduation with graduates within this group being more likely to have found employment in a field related to the training received than graduates who found three or more employment positions since graduation.

- Since graduation, 19% of the graduates contacted had relocated to another province. Approximately 49% of those had returned to New Brunswick by the week of March 18, 2001. At the time of contact in 2001, 90% of graduates were residing in New Brunswick.

- Approximately 33% of graduates contacted had returned to school or training at some point since July 1998 with 66% choosing to return for additional education or training in the same field of study as that completed through the NBCC.

- Overall, 82% of graduates indicated that the NBCC had done an excellent (38%) or good (44%) job of preparing them for employment in a related field.

- Approximately 34% of graduates contacted indicated that they had developed additional skills or abilities during their training at the NBCC which helped them to find a job. The skills or abilities mentioned most frequently included resume development, job search and interviewing skills, communication skills and positive attitudes or behaviours.